

Winterreise

FRANZ SCHUBERT
D. 911

Karol Kozłowski tenor

Jolanta Pawlik piano



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FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828) WINTERREISE

text: Wilhelm Müller (1794–1827)

Karol KOZŁOWSKI - tenor

Jolanta PAWLIK – piano

DUX Małgorzata Polańska & Lech Tołwiński ul. Morskie Oko 2, 02-511 Warszawa

tel./fax (48 22) 849-11-31, (48 22) 849-18-59

e-mail: dux@dux.pl, www.dux.pl

Aleksandra Kitka-Coutellier – International Relations kitka@dux

***Winterreise* – the apotheosis of the fatalistic wandering**

THE PERSON

Warm-hearted, cheerful but frightfully lonely and deeply unhappy at the same time. Seemingly extraverted, yet alienated from people. Morbidly timid, incapable of materializing the already arranged meeting with the worshipped Beethoven, as a result wandering around his apartment for many hours like a stray dog. A typical life and soul of the party that remained lonely deeply inside.

Along these lines, the image of Franz Schubert (1797-1828) – one of the most brilliant and short-lived composers emerges. He is the one who makes us wonder what would have happened if he hadn't died at the early age of 31. For many years he was doomed to battle syphilis that was wreaking havoc at the beginning of 19th century, equal to the deadliest epidemics of 20th century. As we know, common in those times "shameful disease" left a stigma of surrendering to the sinful sexuality on the composer's sensitive psyche. By a tragic twist of fate, frantically and unsuccessfully seeking love Schubert received a short moment of sensual pleasure with fatal consequences in return. Had he lived longer, would he have completed the famous *Symphony in B minor*, written six years before his death, which ends unexpectedly after ethereal ceasing to sound in the second movement, like a mysterious, mystical understatement? Or would he have composed a grand opera he had envisaged? After all, the initial operatic attempts *Alfonso and Estrella* (1822) and, above all, *Fierrabras* (1823) are interesting works that didn't have much success not because of the music itself but rather due to the indolence of the authors of the librettos, who also proved to be unfortunate partners for Schubert, as opposed to the poets for his songs whom he always chose with perfect intuition.

THE MUSIC

Schubert's music, due to its song-like structure of the themes and seemingly plain harmony might seem simple, or even banal at first. However, soon one notices that nothing is obvious here – the abrupt break of the melodic line, the unexpected modulation are capable of bringing us from the naive joy to the zone of a terrifying terror permeated with the premonition of a sudden and nonsensically early death. Child-like confidence, enriched by metaphysical radiance, with the superimposed ability to tell horrifying stories constitute the one of a kind world of Schubert's imagination. Naively simple and excruciatingly cruel at the same time. The territory of pain, earthly and endearingly mystical at the same time, unveils "both the pain, the world and the dream", as stated in the final song of the Mahler's cycle *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* that expresses admiration for Schubert.

The Austrian composer wrote over 600 songs, becoming the Romantic codifier of the form that, indeed, had appeared in the oeuvre of such creators as Mozart or Beethoven, however, never in such quantity and with such mastery. The two cycles *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise* established a sort of an Everest of the song that a few have been able to near but nobody has ever climbed it. Both cycles were composed for the poetry of Wilhelm Müller, in whose poetry Schubert found everything he was searching for: the suffering, the isolation, the fatalism, and the apotheosis of wandering, which had both a symbolical and a spiritual overtone for the Romantics, as the wandering was the parallel to human existence. *Winterreise* contains the *topos* of the Romantic wandering in its title and it is the very first song of the cycle where we encounter the words: "Love and wandering go hand in hand, this is the eternal order, today here, tomorrow over there".

THE METAPHOR OF THE HUMAN LONELINESS

The cycle of 24 songs was created in 1827. A year after the composer was already dead. The work takes us on a trip through an icy landscape of a bleak winter, adverse for the human. The rejected love, condemning the wanderer to a Way of the Cross opens up a boundless space of human suffering, raising the basic existential issues that can be related to an individual, such as the failure of love, isolation, confrontation with hostile environment and the gradual acceptance of the forthcoming death. There is neither pathos, nor romantic raptures here. Everything is told in a simple way, without redundant ornaments, without a mask – often assumed by the later great composers, such as Chopin or Schumann. What clearly fascinates here is the form of the songs, always fluent and unconventionally following the lyrics.

Another enrapturing aspect is the sense of the melody of the language, deprived of any displaced accents or other prosodic fluffs. The piano part is never a plain accompaniment, it is always infiltrating. There is a large amount of onomatopoeic effects and an incessant completion of the space of the poetic metaphor in it.

The researchers of the *Winterreise* find two basic layers in the poetry and music of the cycle. The first one evolves around depressing symbolism of winter, which is reflected by the minor keys, garbled rhythms or a numb calmness. The other one – is a retrospective evocation of lost happiness. This is where the symbolism of spring, with its blossoming nature, comes into place, warmed up by the major keys. That fluid movement from major to minor mode is Schubert's *licentia poetica* that provides the basic elucidation of his style and creates one of a kind harmonic *continuum*. There is also the third area made up of the neutral pictures, assuaging the, conveyed beforehand, dichotomy. There is room both for distant resignation as well as relief here. Although these 3 layers continuously clash with each other, they form an indissoluble whole only once, namely in the 11th song – *Frühlingstraum*, which was noted by Jarosław Mianowski – an outstanding analyst of Schubert's music, who sensed that the cheerful world of the initial retrospection shall be destroyed by the squawking present, which is symbolized by the ghoulish cawing of the crows circling over the frozen wanderer. He shall be partially relieved by an emotionally neutral vision of art – the image of intricate patterns painted by the frost on the window panes.

Schubert's *Winterreise* is not only one of the milestones in the development of the romantic music but also one of the finest metaphors of human loneliness and inevitability of doom, taking its place in the pantheon of artistic masterpieces.

Piotr Deptuch

translation by Łukasz Pawlik

Karol KOZŁOWSKI

Graduated from the Academy of Music in Gdańsk (MA in Singing and Drama with distinction, 2007) where he studied with dr Stanisław Daniel Kotliński. He is also a graduate of the Faculty of Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. Participated in master classes of Ryszard Karczykowski, Rolando Panerai, Salvatore Fisichella, Sylvia Geszty, Helena Łazarska and Claudio Desderi. He was awarded the second prize at the Hariclea Darclée International Voice Competition (Romania, 2005). Karol Kozłowski has also been a nominee for the 2013 Polityka's Passport Award for classical music and together with pianist Jolanta Pawlik for the 2013 Fryderyk Award in the category: chamber music – the artists recorded a cycle of F.Schubert's songs *Die schöne Müllerin* (DUX, 2012). In years 2007–2009 he was a soloist of the Wrocław Opera, where he debuted as Alfred in *Die Fledermaus (The Bat)* by J.Strauss, and sung also the part of Tamino in *The Magic Flute* by W.A.Mozart, Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* by G.Rossini, Cassio in *Otello* by G.Verdi and Archangel in *Paradise Lost* by K.Penderecki. Karol Kozłowski has sung on the stages of the Théâtre Montansier in Versailles (Oebalus in W.A.Mozart's *Apollo et Hyacinthus*), the Latvian National Opera in Riga (Count Almaviva in G.Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*), Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz in Munich (Lindoro in G.Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*) and of the Kyiv Opera (Edrisi in K.Szymanowski's *King Roger*). Since 2009 he has collaborated with the Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera, where he has been featured as Vitellozzo in G.Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*, Misail in M.Musorgski's *Boris Godunov*, Damazy in S.Moniuszko's *The Haunted Manor*, Young Servant in R.Strauss' *Elektra*, Kudryash in L.Janáček's *Káťa Kabanová*, Edrisi in K.Szymanowski's *King Roger*, Goro in G.Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, the Dancing Master and the Lamplighter in G.Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* and Father Mignon in K.Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudun*. Since 2010 Kozłowski has been a soloist in the Capella Cracoviensis early music ensemble. Together with Capella Cracoviensis he has performed Monteverdi's music (in the *m.m.m.bar.okowa ucztą* project), Haydn's *Stabat Mater*, *Requiem* and *The Great Mass in C minor* by W.A.Mozart. He has also sung J.S.Bach's *Magnificat* as well as the Evangelist's part in Bach's both *St John Passion* and *St Matthew Passion*. He has cooperated with such conductors as Fabio Bonizzoni, Andreas Spering, Andrew Parrott, Konrad Junghänel, Kai Wessel, Christophe Rousset and Jan Tomasz Adamus. He participated in concert performances of G.F.Haendel's operas, where he sang Bajazet in *Tamerlano* and Lurcanio in *Ariodante*. He has collaborated with major Polish baroque music ensembles, performing on period instruments i.a. Wrocław Baroque Orchestra, The {oh!} Orkiestra Historyczna, Musicae Antiquae Collegium Varsoviense, Il Giardino d'Amore and Arte dei Suonatori. His voice's exceptional timbre and versatility has inspired also living composers. Since 2012 Kozłowski has regularly participated in the Kissinger Sommer Festival in Bad Kissingen, where parallel to the masterpieces of Romantic and 20th century art song (accompanied by such outstanding pianists like Melvyn Tan, Axel Bauni and Jan Philip Schulze) he has performed the world premiere pieces for voice and piano, written especially for him by i.a. Oliver Schneller, Manfred Trojahn and Bernd Redmann. In 2014 composition of Andrzej Kwieciński – *Canzon de' baci* for tenor and orchestra won the 61th International Rostrum of Composers in Helsinki. The piece was performed for the first time in Katowice a year earlier during the 6th Festival of Premieres – Karol Kozłowski was accompanied by AUKSO Chamber Orchestra of the City of Tychy under the baton of Marek Moś. The artist's tenor

voice inspired Paweł Mykietyn – one of the most eminent composers of contemporary music – to cast Karol Kozłowski as Settembrini in his new opera *The Magic Mountain*. The world premiere directed by Andrzej Chyra took place at Malta Festival 2015 in Poznań.

Jolanta PSZCZÓLKOWSKA-PAWLIK is a graduate of the Frederic Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw in the piano class of professor Barbara Hesse-Bukowska and the chamber music class of Krystyna Makowska-Ławrynowicz. Her other teachers and mentors include also Barbara Michałowska, Anna Radziwonowicz and Włodzimierz Obidowicz. As a student of Józef Elsner Secondary School of Music, she was a four-year recipient of the Frederic Chopin Scholarship for young, talented Warsaw-based pianists. She participated in the master classes of T. Nikolayeva and J.E.Gardiner at the Bachakademie-Stuttgart in 1991. She has served as a tutor-accompanist at F. Chopin University of Music in Warsaw for 20 years. In the 90's she worked for the voice studio of Halina Słonicka, from 2000-2011 of Jadwiga Rappé, and since 2011, of Włodzimierz Zalewski.

She has collaborated with such artist as B.Betley, U.Trawińska-Moroz, J.Artysz, I.Kłosińska, R.Cieśla and A.Stefanowicz. She also served as an accompanist for master classes with Ryszard Karczykowski, and for the clinics at the International Music Courses in Łańcut. She has given numerous concerts with her son Łukasz, a cellist, receiving a distinction for the best accompaniment at the Kazimierz Wiłkomirski Cello Competition in Poznań in 2000. She has performed many times with the scholars of the Polish Children's Fund at the King's Castle in Warsaw. In 2008, along with Kira Boreczko, she performed at the inauguration of the 1st H.Słonicka Polish Vocal Festival in Wigry. In the recent years she has been collaborating with the Mazowieckie Centrum Kultury (Masovian Centre of Culture). She has made numerous records for Polish Radio and Television. In 2012 she recorded Franz Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* with the tenor Karol Kozłowski. The internationally-distributed album was nominated for Fryderyk 2013 – the award of Polish phonographic industry for best records of the year, in the category of chamber music. The CD met with an enthusiastic reception from both Polish and international critics and was reviewed in such magazines as, among others, New York Metropolitan Opera's *Opera News* (08-2013) and the Polish *Hi-Fi i Muzyka*, being ranked among the best classical records of the year by the latter. *Die schöne Müllerin* by Pawlik and Kozłowski has been presented live at many prestigious festivals, both in Poland and abroad.

In 2014, along with a young mezzo-soprano Elwira Janasik, soloist of the Grand Theatre in Łódź, she recorded the album *Moniuszko-Songs*. The CD received excellent reviews and was praised by critics for the fact that it featured several Moniuszko's songs that had never been released before.

Jolanta Pawlik is also a CD producer. She produced *Night In Calisia* by Włodek Pawlik that won a Grammy Award in 2014.